

News Release

Steinbeck Classic Comes to the Kiehle Auditorium Stage at the U of M Crookston on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, March 25-27, 2010; Performances nightly at 7 p.m. with special afternoon performance on Friday, March 26 at 1 p.m.

By Itollems on Tuesday, March 9, 2010

John Steinbeck's drama *Of Mice and Men* will be performed at the University of Minnesota, Crookston on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, March 25-27, 2010. Performances will be held nightly at 7 p.m. in the historic Kiehle Auditorium. A special performance will take place on Friday, March 26 at 1 p.m. especially for high school students and senior citizens groups. There is no admission charge, but donations will be accepted to help pay for the cost of the production. The play is best suited for mature audiences.



*Of Mice and Men*, an American classic, examines the universal struggle to find one's place in an uncertain world. It follows two migrant workers, George Milton, played by Ben Williams, a freshman from Excelsior, Minn.; and Lennie Small played by Joe Harren, a sophomore from Eagle Bend, Minn., during the Great Depression. Problems arise due to Lennie's combination of mental disabilities, his size, and incredible strength, which George works diligently to keep under control. As the two struggle to get by, George faces difficult decisions on how to handle the growing problem of Lennie.

Under the direction of Teaching Specialist Linnea Barton, *Of Mice and Men* features a combination of community members and U of M, Crookston students in the cast and examines some tough themes including racism, sexism, class, discrimination against persons with disabilities. Assisting her is student director and junior Kenneth Mendez, a communication major from Crookston, Minn.

Additionally, several departments in both academics and student affairs are providing support for this production including the U of M, Crookston Music and Theater Department. Special support has come from Facilities Management staff in the development of the set for this production.

The role of Candy will be played by Dan Wolpert, from Crookston, Minn., and he will be joined by the family dog, Sadie Wolpert. Alongside Ben Williams and Harren, Ashley Williams, a junior from Big Lake, Minn., and Katelyn Zins, a sophomore from Starbuck, Minn., will share the only female role in the show as Curley's Wife. Hank Pinta, a junior from Grafton, N.D., will take on the role of Curley.

Ian MacRae, an associate professor at the Northwest Research and Outreach Center plays the character of Boss. He is accompanied by the farm hands Crooks, played by Broderick Williams, a sophomore from Minneapolis, Minn.; Slim, played by Austin Czichotzki, a sophomore from Barnesville, Minn.; Carlson, played by Jarrod Lanctot, a senior from Crookston, Minn.; and Whit, played by Mendez.

For more information on the production, contact Barton at 218-281-8553.

Today the University of Minnesota, Crookston delivers more than 25 bachelor's degree programs and 50 concentrations, including several online degrees, in agriculture and natural resources; arts, humanities and social sciences; business; and math, science and technology. With an enrollment of about 1,300 undergraduates, the Crookston campus offers a supportive, close-knit atmosphere that leads to a prestigious University of Minnesota degree. "Small Campus. Big Degree." To learn more, visit [www.umcrookston.edu](http://www.umcrookston.edu).

In the photo: Members of the play cast are (l to r): Sadie (the dog) Wolpert, Dan Wolpert, Ian MacRae, Ashley Williams, Austin Czichotzki, Ben Williams, Joe Harren, Linnea Barton, Director, Katelyn Zins, Jarrod Lanctot, Hank Pinta, and Ken Mendez. Not pictured: Broderick Williams.

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